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TAGS: [EG](#) [ENRG](#) [IS](#) [KNNP](#) [MNUC](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [NPT](#) [IAEA](#)
SUBJECT: ISN DAS HAYWARD'S MEETINGS WITH ISRAELI OFFICIALS
ON NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION, JERUSALEM, SEPTEMBER 11, 2008

REF: STATE 101698

Classified By: ISN DAS Mary Alice Hayward for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: ISN DAS Mary Alice Hayward, accompanied by a State Department delegation, briefed Israeli officials September 11 on the delegation's September 8 meeting in Cairo on Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference (GC), and nuclear terrorism issues. Hayward stated that Egypt had expressed its disappointment that the 1995 NPT RevCon resolution on the Middle East has yet to be implemented and that the United States had not shown sufficient "political will" to do more to persuade Israel to join the NPT and to accept IAEA safeguards on all of its nuclear facilities. On the IAEA GC, the Egyptians had made clear that they saw no linkage between the two resolutions on the Middle East (one by Egypt; the other by the Arab League) routinely presented in that forum. Hayward noted that she had pressed Egypt to join the Global Initiative and that she had put forward a proposal for Egyptian participation in a technical workshop on nonproliferation that would also include Israel. The Israelis, led by Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Arms Control Director Rodica Radian-Gordon, briefed on their perspectives on Egyptian-Israeli relations, Arab attitudes toward Iran and the latter's role in the region, and Egypt's arms control policies. END SUMMARY.

12. (U) DAS Hayward - joined by Ambassador Marguerita Ragsdale (Director of ISN's Office of Multilateral Nuclear and Security Affairs (MNSA)), Scott Davis (MNSA Deputy Director); Jody Daniel (ISN's Regional Affairs Office); and Michael Honigstein (Embassy Tel Aviv Political Officer) - met in Jerusalem September 11 with Rodica Radian-Gordon (Foreign Affairs (MFA) Arms Control Director), her deputy Tamar Rahamimoff-Honig, Joshua Zarka (Israel Atomic Energy Commission), Israel Tikochinski (MFA's Arms Control Department), Dov Segev-Steinberg (Director, MFA's Egypt Department), Ifat Reshef (MFA's Center for Political Research), and Jonathan Keller (Israeli Defense Forces).

13. (C) Hayward initiated discussions by noting Egypt's view, as expressed in her September 8 discussions with MFA interlocutors (reftel), that achieving a Middle East weapons of mass-destruction (WMD)-free zone is too essential for security in the region to wait for progress in the peace process. She also reported that Egypt had pressed the United States to make greater efforts to persuade Israel to join the NPT and to accept IAEA safeguards on all of its nuclear facilities. Hayward explained that the U.S. is intensifying its dialogue with Egypt and Israel in order to seek progress

on nonproliferation issues in the Middle East. She and her team had put forward to the Egyptians a series of "baby steps" that both Egypt and Israel might take, including greater dialogue between the sides; a trilateral dialogue that includes the U.S.; and hosting a technical workshop with Egyptian, Israeli and possibly other Arab state participation (see reftel). She indicated that a non-paper containing details of the workshop proposal would be provided to both Israel and Egypt in the near future. The Egyptian reaction had been cautious, Hayward said. Hayward stated that she had been very much in a listening mode with her Egyptian interlocutors, preferring not to engage in a "point-counterpoint" debate with them on the issues they raised regarding Israel and the NPT. She noted particularly Egypt's expression of frustration in its perception that little progress had been made in implementation of the 1995 NPT RevCon's Resolution on the Middle East. Hayward also told the Israelis that she had encouraged Egypt to join the Global Initiative, although her interlocutors expressed a preference to work on such matters within a multilateral context.

¶4. (C) Segev-Steinberg briefed the U.S. team on Egyptian-Israeli relations, noting that Egypt-Israel relations have been defined in recent years by the following: the 2006 Lebanon War which highlighted that Egypt has lost its traditional leadership role in the Arab world; the shared Egyptian-Israeli interest in controlling Egypt's boarder with

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Gaza; and a growing opposition within Egypt that is critical of the peace process. All of these issues have made the Egyptian government more carefully manage its relationship with Israel in recent years. Segev-Steinberg noted that the strange state of Israeli-Egyptian relations is evident in the fact that Egypt and Israel experience good relations in certain areas, like trade, while at the same time the Egyptian Culture Minister calls for the burning of all Israeli books.

¶5. (C) Noting that Egypt-Israel relations on security matters cannot be fully understood outside the context of the regional security environment, Reshef discussed Arab perceptions of the Iran threat. She stated that the Sunni Arab states are struggling to exert control over the issues in the region, but due to a lack of clear leadership among the Arab states, non-Arab actors (Iran, Israel, Turkey) are now dominant in the region. She argued that the Arab states are too weak and suspicious of each other to resist the growth of Iranian influence. The Gulf Cooperation Council states have substantial reason to fear Iran even without Iran pursuing nuclear weapons, but lingering suspicions among them has prevented anything more than a weak coalition which is far from able to counter Iranian influence. Reshef continued that Iran's influence in the Arab world is evidenced by its ability to make Hizbollah the strongest ethnic and political group in Lebanon. Reshef characterized Jordan as "weak and vulnerable" but a "barometer" of Arab sentiments in the region, as its government is more flexible and thus more responsive to shifting Arab attitudes than Egypt. Jordan, she said, was the first to identify publicly the new threat from Iran. Lamentably, however, Jordan's softened attitude toward Iran in the face of what it sees as a "new reality" in the region may be a harbinger of shifting attitudes among all Sunni Arab states.

¶6. (C) Tikochinski suggested that that there are three main elements of Egypt's arms control policies: (1) Egyptian aspirations a visible leading role in spite of its declining regional influence; (2) the stock Non-Aligned Movement criticism of western "double standards" on disarmament; and (3) a "zero-sum game" with Israel on arms control. These elements all help explain Egypt's emphasis on eliminating Israel's nuclear capability regardless of the state of the peace process. Tamar Rahamimoff-Honig argued that Israel and Egypt differ in approaches to arms control. Israel believes

that since arms races stem from political conflict, progress in addressing arms issues has to be incremental and made slowly, starting with modest confidence-building measures. She added that the security of one state cannot be simply dismissed by others. Moreover, she continued, one must also consider non-state actors in assessing security, adding that outside fora cannot impose solutions on the Middle East.

17. (C) Zarka suggested that, by insisting that a Middle East WMD-free zone is a prerequisite to peace in the region, Egypt does not seem interested in making real progress on this issue. He assessed that Egypt's new approach is a ploy to ensure that Israel will not support Egypt's resolution on safeguards in the Middle East at the IAEA General Conference, thus ensuring there will be no consensus on the resolution and the issue will continue to be contentious. He added that Egypt is not negotiating with Israel on its draft GC resolution and should be encouraged to as soon as possible. He stated his belief that the primary message that should be conveyed to Egypt is that it should speak directly to Israel.

Segev-Steinberg opined that this Egyptian unwillingness to engage with Israel is part of a pattern and that, while Israel had proposed "joint political committees" in the past, Egypt has consistently indicated that they are not necessary.

18. (SBU) Hayward described the status of U.S. discussions with Egypt, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates on civil nuclear energy cooperation. Radian-Gordon asked whether recent developments in U.S.-Russian relations would affect the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Hayward said she did not think so and indicated that our efforts to have the CD begin negotiations on a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty would continue.

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